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
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**FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION COVER SHEET**

DATE: April 22, 2005

TO: Mail Stop Amendment  
Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

RE: U.S. Patent Application No. 10/042,549  
For: TANTALUM AND NIOBIUM BILLETS  
AND METHODS OF PRODUCING THE SAME  
Our Ref.: CPM00029CIP (3600-328-01)

FROM: Luke A. Kilyk, Esq. 

FAC. TEL. NO.: 1-703-872-9306

NUMBER OF PAGES (INCLUDING THIS COVER SHEET): 26

Items Attached: Amendment - 25 pages

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to the United States Patent and Trademark Office, Fax No. 1-703-872-9306 on April 22, 2005.

Donald S. Prater / Kim Blum  
Name (Print)  
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**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

In re Application of: Michaluk	)	Examiner: Lois L. Zheng
	)	
Application Number: 10/042,549	)	Group Art Unit: 1742
	)	
Filed: January 9, 2002	)	Confirmation No.: 5470
	)	
Docket No.: CPM00029CIP (3600-328-01)	)	

For: TANTALUM AND NIOBIUM BILLETS AND METHODS OF PRODUCING THE SAME

**AMENDMENT**

Mail Stop Amendment  
Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

April 22, 2005

Sir:

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action dated January 25, 2005 in the above-identified application, for which the Examiner has set a three-month period for response, thus making the response due on or before April 25, 2005.

**Amendments to the Claims** begin at page 2 of this paper.

**Remarks/Arguments** begin at page 12 of this paper.